

BOY SCOUTS LOSING MONEY OVER HOMOSEXUAL ISSUE

September 1, 2000 (David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org) - The Boy Scouts of America has been fighting a commendable battle for several years to keep homosexuals out of leadership positions. Since the early 1990s, the group has been the target of a number of lawsuits coordinated by the Lambda Legal Defense Fund, a homosexual rights pressure group. In 1990 a Boy Scout troop in Monmouth, New Jersey, dismissed 20-year-old assistant scoutmaster James Dale when it learned that he was homosexual. As a student at Rutgers University, he had become a leader of the gay student group; and a story about his homosexual activism appeared in the Rutgers' paper. The Boy Scouts was subsequently sued, and in August 1999 the New Jersey Supreme Court ruled in favor of the homosexual, claiming that his dismissal violated a state law banning discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. The judges ruled that the Boy Scouts are not strictly a private organization but a "public accommodation" because "they invite the public to join, attend or participate in some way" ("Boy Scouts' Gay Ban Illegal," Los Angeles Times, August 5, 1999). If left standing, this ruling would overthrow religious liberty in America. If any organization that "invites the public to join, attend or participate in some way" must fall under government mandate, the churches will be left with no protection from the onslaught of the politically correct insanity that is sweeping the land.

The Lord God answered prayer, though, and in June the New Jersey ruling was overturned by the United States Supreme Court. Chief Justice William Rehnquist--joined by Justices Kennedy, O'Connor, Scalia, and Thomas--ruled that the Boy Scouts have a right to oppose homosexual conduct as contrary to the values it seeks to instill, and that forcing the Scouts to accept homosexuals as troop leaders would violate the organization's First Amendment rights to free expression and free association. (The Supreme Court of California ruled unanimously in the same way in 1998.)

Having won that major legal hurdle, though, the Boy Scouts are facing a financial battle that might be even more difficult. The powerful sodomite lobby has geared up to fight against the Boy Scouts, and United Way groups are beginning to drop the Boy Scouts because of their discrimination against homosexuals. These include Portland, Maine; Providence, Rhode Island; New Haven, Connecticut; Santa Fe, New Mexico; and San Francisco, California. The United Way in Orlando, Florida, is preparing to vote on the issue. The city of Chicago was forced in court to give up its sponsorship of Boy Scout posts. United Way is a community funding effort that channels volunteer donations into various charities, one of which is the Boy Scouts. For example, the Heart of Florida United Way collected \$19.4 million last year, and \$300,000 of that was given to the Boy Scouts. (On the other hand,

Chase Manhattan Corp. announced on August 31 it will resume funding to the Boy Scouts, which it had suspended.)

Another attack is coming from the federal government. According to the Washington Times (August 31, 2000), the Clinton-Gore administration has ordered the Interior Department to determine whether it is complying with his executive order banning discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. White House Deputy Press Secretary Jake Siewert confirmed this. The investigation targets the Boy Scouts' use of government-owned land, and a possible goal of the investigation is to ban the Boy Scouts from federal parks. Bill Clinton and Al Gore are members of Southern Baptist churches and claim to be Christians, but they have wickedly furthered the cause of "homosexual rights" by appointing large numbers of homosexuals to positions within the government and by raising "sexual preference" to the level of civil rights protection.

Even from a practical, common-sense position, it is insanity to say that the Boy Scouts should be forced to accept homosexual scout leaders. The Girl Scouts don't accept male scout leaders. Why? For moral reasons and for the protection of the girls. Likewise, it is the height of politically-correct folly to allow homosexual males, who are sexually attracted to boys, to be in charge of the same.

By the way, when some Boy Scouts participated in the opening ceremony of the Democratic National Convention this month, they were booed by many of the party delegates. California delegates held signs reading "We Support Gay Boy Scouts."

GET OUT AND VOTE

The recent Supreme Court ruling which overthrew the dangerous decision of the New Jersey court reminds us of the importance of the upcoming presidential elections. It is possible that the next president will have an opportunity to appoint a new Supreme Court justice. The aforementioned ruling was 5 in favor of and 4 opposed to the Scouts. Thus, the replacement of only one justice has the potential to dramatically change the character of the Supreme Court. In many ways, the Republican and Democratic Parties are the same. Neither represent what Bible-believing people truly desire, but realistically speaking, they are all we have. And the two parties have some very significant differences in areas that affect Christian people. Gore is for abortion on demand; Bush is against it. Gore is for homosexual rights; Bush is against it (at least against homosexual marriages and adoptions). Gore is for increasing the already onerous environmental laws; Bush is against it. Gore is against school choice; Bush is for it. Many other examples could be given. I wish the choice were even better, but then again, the choice we do have is clear. There is a difference between the two men, and it does matter

who is president. The reason we don't have a better candidate and a better party is because we don't have a better country. America has a democratically elected government. Thus, the government will reflect the moral character of the country as a whole. A truly godly man who is committed to the Bible would not have a chance to be elected president in this day and time. Likewise, apart from a nationwide spiritual revival, it would not be possible for a truly Bible-based political party to gain power. There is no "moral majority" in 21st-century America. Biblical morality is an extreme minority position. You are free to differ with me (and I do not have the time nor interest to debate the matter by e-mail), but I believe that it is important to vote this fall, and to vote for a man who both has a chance of being elected and who, at the same time, best represents the needs of the country. I know of some Bible-believing people who refuse to vote because they do not want to vote for a less-than-perfect candidate. That is their privilege, but by not voting (or by voting for a third party man who has no chance of election) they are potentially allowing an even more ungodly candidate to succeed.

DON'T FORGET TO PRAY

Even more important than voting, though, is prayer. God does not command us to participate in politics, but He does command us to pray. "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" (1 Timothy 2:1,2).